7:Crowder J-5 (1955-1958) 1959
MS37 Senegal MS37
Dakar
Wolof MS 30



Arnold was critical of these Colons, for in British West Africa there is no such class. Indeed he seemed almost to resent their presence, though he has no dislike of Europeans. His opinion is shared by a number of Africans who come into competition with whites for jobs.

'In Lagos the counter girls are African. Why shouldn't they be here?' Arnold argued.

On the other hand in Lagos service and shopping facilities are infinitely inferior to those of Dakar. Another thing that struck Arnold was the absence of Africans from the main cafés and hotels. Surely this indicated a subtle colour bar, he argued. However, I had the answer to this from an African whom I invited to have a drink in a café with me. He declined, because as a Muslim it would not do for him to be seen in a café by any of his friends or relations. If they did see him there would be terrible trouble.

The Jollofs, Dakar's main tribe, are proud of their race and not over-keen on mixing with whites. Nevertheless relations between African and European in Dakar are extremely cordial. France is still aware of the debt that she owes the Senegalese troops for their part in the last war. There is, moreover, none of the patronizing attitude in the French approach to the African. If anything, as many French complain, the Jollof is the one who does the patronizing.

We went from the Hotel de Fleurs to some rooms in IFAN, the Institut Français D'Afrique Noire, which were lent us by its Director, Professor Theodore Monod, whom I had met on my last visit to Dakar. Professor Monod is one of the most impressive men I have ever met. He received us both in his large, book-lined office without looking up from his work. We both fumbled and fidgeted nervously studying the pictures on the wall, many of which were religious paintings or texts from the Bible. When I was beginning to feel acutely embarrassed, he looked up from his work revealing a gaunt, hollow face with deep-set piercing eyes, half obscured behind the glass of his horn-rimmed spectacles. I informed him that we had met some two years before, and that I should be grateful for his help on my journey. He looked at me vaguely, smiled, and then suddenly seemed to come into contact with the world we inhabited, and promised to arrange for letters

7:Crowder J-5 (1955-1958) 1959
MS37 Senegal MS37



of introduction to be sent to the Directors of his Institute in all the towns we should be visiting. We talked for a moment at human level, then a glance at his papers, a distant look in his eyes, indicated it was time for us to leave.

Monod is an established expert on the following subjects: geology; geography: physical, climatic, regional and human; archaeology; history; marine biology; ethnography; botany; zoology; pre-history; and languages. He has over 400 publications to his name and has published two best-sellers in France. He went down in the bathyscope with Professor Piccard and with Captain Houot. His real love is the Sahara Desert. He must know it better than any other man alive. His first journey into the unknown wastes of the Sahara was in 1923, and by 1930 he had travelled its length and breadth from Algiers to Timbuktu, from Mauretania to Lake Chad. Friends called the gaunt young man, who rode off into the desert wastes alone with a camel, 'Monod le Fou'. Today he is known more respectfully as 'Monod le Saharien'. In the winter of 1954 he completed a phenomenal trek across the desert over a distance never before dared by another white man. With four camels, two Arabs, and a strict daily ration of half a litre of wine, Monod, aged 52, covered 900 kilometres in 47 days.

Theodore Monod has probably done as much as any European to give dignity to the culture and traditions of the tribes of West Africa, and to preserve these traditions for their future inheritors when the steamroller of Western civilization threatens to obliterate them. The Institut Français D'Afrique Noire, which he directs, has a federal museum in Dakar and a network of museums and research centres throughout French Black Africa. It employs scholars in every field of knowledge concerning Africa, and most important of all, it gives African scholars an opportunity to make research into their own customs, traditions and history.

Monsieur Pierre Cros, of the Press Section of the Federal Information Services, who was to help us as much as anyone in our travels in West Africa, received us in his small office on the ninth floor of the vast Federal Administration building. What impressed me most about the Federal Information Services was their very considerable knowledge of British West Africa. Fortnightly they published a resumé of the local press of Nigeria,